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# New Technology and Military Power: General Purpose Military Forces for the 1980s and Beyond

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tile action by the United States in the war and that the *Cormoran* prisoners were the first to be taken into custody. While the story of *Cormoran* will never take much space in the annals of the war, *The Frustrated Raider* captures a short colorful moment of history in an intensely interesting manner and reminds us that ships are made of more than iron.

J.P. MORSE

Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy

Dietchman, Seymour S. *New Technology and Military Power: General Purpose Military Forces for the 1980s and Beyond*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press 1979. 283pp.

Mr. Dietchman is no novice when it comes to military technology and General Purpose Forces, having spent 5 years working within the Department of Defense and currently serving as Vice President, Planning and Evaluation, of the Institute for Defense Analyses. In fact one gets the nagging feeling that this well-written book is a compilation of all those OSD/IDA studies that one had to read/comment on during Pentagon tours. Like all of Gaul the book is divided into three parts:

- an introduction to the Military Technological Revolution

- a discussion of the utility of General Purpose Forces

- some suggestions on the creation and maintenance of those General Purpose Forces.

Part I is perhaps the most fascinating part of the book. It is the journey from military technology as the grist for World War II movies to the nuclear threshold concept, laser guided weapons, space surveillance systems, etc. Here the author treats not only the capabilities that new technology has brought to the battlefield but the problems as well. He examines tactical nuclear war and concludes that the problems inherent therein (mostly associated

with collateral damage/effects) make it an unattractive option. This leads to the importance of the precision-guided conventional munitions which are then discussed with respect to sea, air, and land battles. Familiarly, the author finds the effect of new technology greatest at sea and he suggests some alternative force structures to accommodate the new realities. Do smaller but more carriers and increased support from long-range land based aircraft sound familiar? Actually some of the author's concepts (increase the attack capability of the battle group and redistribute the self-defense burden) are not all bad. Some readers will be uneasy with his analyses and costing techniques, but this section is a serious attempt to deal with the very hard issues facing all the services today as they grapple with the unprecedented problems of managing battlefield space and time.

Part II of the book is somewhat disjointed in addressing uses of General Purpose Forces. Predictably it leads off with a short history of warfare since World War II and then focuses on the defense of Western Europe for two chapters before leaving the reader dangling by concluding with a look at the Soviet Union as "threat." One cannot help but recall the refrain from a not so popular song of a few years back—"Is that all there is?"

Part III attempts to solve the problem of the cost of creating and sustaining General Purpose Forces. It is well done but offers little new or innovative. Better management and HI-LO mixes seem the dominant themes. Certainly it is difficult to fault better management as a concept, yet it seems that the Department of Defense has been restructured or its procedures modified ad nauseam under the banner of better management. Each of us probably has his own favorite candidate for inclusion under the better management program and the author has several, all of which make eminently good sense but at one

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time or another have fallen victim to somebody's organizational essence.

On HI-LO mixes however, there is more than adequate room for rational men to disagree. The disagreement is fundamental because it has to do with the purpose of navies. Perhaps the bottom line is this—with the global reach demonstrated by the Soviet Navy, the level of threat that U.S. naval forces must face in any strategically significant area of the world is at Soviet initiative, not ours. I'm not sure how the low mix plays in that scenario.

On balance *New Technology and Military Power* is a fair treatment of the issues facing the services with respect to the future of General Purpose Forces and in a larger sense our overall national security. It is clearly focused toward those outside the defense community, however, and to the extent it may educate them it will be useful.

J.S. HURLBURT  
Commander, U.S. Navy

Elliott, Daniel, comp. *Maritime History: A Preliminary Hand-list of the Collection in the John Carter Brown Library, Brown University, with a Special Section on Sir Francis Drake*. Providence, R.I.: John Carter Brown Library, 1979. 335pp.

The John Carter Brown Library at Brown University has long been recognized as one of the nation's most distinguished research libraries. Its growing collection of books relating to America, printed before 1800, remains a major source for historians of the colonial period. It should not be at all surprising that such a collection also contains a distinguished group of books relating to maritime affairs. The early history of the Americas is so closely tied to the sea that it could not be neglected. Certainly, the discovery, exploration, trade, economy and colonial rivalry among the European powers are all related, in one manner or another, to the men and ships that plied the seas.

The origin of the library in the seafaring Brown family is reflected in the collection, and these original contributions have been specifically enhanced by the valuable gifts of Zechariah Chafee and his son, Dr. Francis Chafee. Over the years the library has been extensively used by many historians in the field of maritime history. The former librarian, Lawrence C. Wroth, drew attention to its riches through his justly famous study, *The Way of a Ship: An Essay on the Literature of Navigational Science* (1937) and through his later work, *Some American Contributions to the Art of Navigation 1519-1802* (1947) and *The Voyages of Giovanni da Verrazano 1524-28* (1970).

One of the immediate stimuli to the publication of this handlist was the academic programs at the Munson Institute of American Maritime History at Mystic Seaport. The Librarian of the John Carter Brown Library makes particular reference to the value that his collection has to the studies going on there that concentrate on the history of the American merchant marine. It would be no less true to note that this handlist is equally important to an even closer neighbor of Brown University, the Naval War College, and to all of us who concentrate our efforts in the study of naval history and maritime affairs. Indeed, our own collection of manuscripts and rare books in Newport provides a useful complement to both institutions. Nor should we forget our neighbors at Woods Hole, New Bedford, Salem, Providence and New London who work in related areas of maritime studies.

The present spiral-bound book is a preliminary handlist and finding aid, not an exhaustive study of the library's resources in this area. With the exception of the special section on Sir Francis Drake, a large collection of voyages has been excluded from the list. Although the larger group is missing, it is